

REMARKS

The applicants have carefully considered the Office action of September 21, 2009.

By way of this response, claims 1-4 and 6-16 have been amended, claim 5 has been cancelled without prejudice to its further prosecution, and claims 21-24 have been added. The applicants respectfully submit that all claims are fully supported in the original specification. In view of the following, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claim 7 has been amended to address the objection thereto.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Independent claim 1 was rejected as unpatentable over Weiss et al. (United States Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0144144) in view of Walker et al. (United States Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0005115). The applicants traverse these rejections and respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable over the cited art.

Independent Claim 1

Independent claim 1 recites a network interface unit comprising a graphical user interface server for presenting an authentication menu to a client device. Further, claim 1 recites that when a first client device is incompatible with the authentication menu, an authentication means is to authenticate the first client device in response to an authentication of a second client device via the authentication menu, the second client device being compatible with the authentication menu.

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As admitted in the Office action, Weiss et al. do not teach or suggest a graphical user interface for presenting a menu to client devices. To cure this deficiencies of Weiss et al., the Office action cites Walker et al. Walker et al. describe a graphical user interface (GUI) to aid an operator in facilitating connectivity to a resource (e.g., high speed computers to which a plurality of users of conventional computers request access for complex computations) regardless of the type of connectivity to be used. As different users are configured to connect to the resource using different configurations or types of connectivity, the GUI described by Walker et al. receives a client name and a configuration module determines what type of connectivity is associated with the received client name in a database.

However, Walker et al. fail to teach or an authentication means to, when a first client device is incompatible with an authentication menu to be presented thereon, authenticate the first, incompatible client device in response to an authentication of a second, compatible client device, as recited in claim 1. The example network interface unit recited in claim 1 enables a client device that is unable to interact with the authentication menu (and/or authentication menu-compatible client devices) to be authorized via, for example, another client device of the LAN to which the incompatible client device belongs. That is, the example network interface unit of claim 1 enables an authentication menu-compatible client device to login and authenticate with the network interface unit on behalf of a second client device on the same LAN.

Neither Weiss et al., Walker et al., nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests the network interface unit of claim 1. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully submit that the §103 rejections of claim 1 and all claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 21

Independent claim 21 recites a method including authenticating a first client device associated with a first LAN via an authentication menu in response to receiving valid authentication information from the first client device. Further, claim 21 recites, when a second client device associated with the first LAN is incompatible with the authentication menu, authenticating the second client device of the first LAN in response to the authentication of the first client device of the first LAN, the first client device being compatible with the authentication menu.

Neither Weiss et al., Walker et al., nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests the method of claim 21. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully submit that the §103 rejections of claim 21 and all claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 23

Independent claim 23 recites a machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause a machine to authenticate a first client device associated with a first LAN via an authentication menu in response to receiving valid authentication information from the first client device. Further, claim 23 recites that the machine readable medium has instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause a machine to, when a second client device associated with the first LAN is incompatible with the authentication menu, authenticate the second client device of the first LAN in response to the authentication of the first client device of the first LAN, the first client device being compatible with the authentication menu.

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Neither Weiss et al., Walker et al., nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests the method of claim 23. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully submit that the §103 rejections of claim 23 and all claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and request reconsideration of this application and an early favorable action on the merits.

In general, the Office Action makes various statements regarding the claims and the cited references that are now moot in light of the above. Thus, the applicants will not address such statements at the present time. However, the applicants expressly reserve the right to challenge such statements in the future should the need arise (e.g., if such statements should become relevant by appearing in a rejection of any current or future claim).

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to refund any overpayment and charge any deficiency in the amount paid in connection with this paper or any additional fees which may be required during the pendency of this application under 37 CFR 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 50-2455. In addition, if a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) is necessary to maintain the pendency of this case and is not otherwise requested in this case, the applicants request that the Commissioner consider this paper to be a petition for

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an extension of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(a) corresponding to the needed extension of time to Deposit Account No. 50-2455.

Respectfully submitted,

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